

December 2025/January 2026

OPEN DOOR




The Thurstable
& Winstree
Team Ministry



£1.00

**For Churches in Tiptree, Tolleshunt Knights,
Great Braxted, Messing & Inworth**

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Deadline for the next edition: February/March 2026

Sunday 11th January 2026.

Items for the magazine: can be emailed to thurstableteamadmin@btinternet.com or delivered to St Luke's Parish Office or sent to m.borgartz@btinternet.com

Revd Christine Eaton writes:

December is such an important month for Christians. We celebrate the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ and enjoy all the festivities and services that amazing event led to. I was born in December and thus my mother named me Christine. There are 2 of us in the ministry team with this name. In spite of it being such a lovely time in midwinter, it also means that birthday celebrations get caught up with Christmas and I then wish I was born in the summer, when there are is not so much going on and I could have a lovely outdoor picnic or barbecue. We none of us have a choice as to when we were born and as we don't know the exact moment and time when Jesus was born and we tend to think of how cold he would have been in that stable. But of course it was in the Middle East where it is usually considerably warmer than in the British climate. I expect lots of little babies will be wrapped up in lovely warm clothes if they are born in December, whereas we are told that his mother only had swaddling cloths to wrap him in. In his day and country of course there was no national health service, no nice hygienic hospitals to be born in and no child benefits available. But Mary and Joseph brought the child Jesus up in very difficult circumstances and still loved and cared for him like most children and no doubt he had some lovely moments being part of his earthly family. He may not have any memory of the problems his parents faced after he was born, but he grew up a fine young human person, who would have loved having the brothers and sisters that came along later, which helped him always to understand how we as human beings function and feel. How lovely it is to realise that our Saviour understands all the good, the bad and the many different aspects of human upbringings and we benefit from that and knowing we are all loved and treasured in the Christian family. Jesus spent a few years during his ministry on earth being part of us and it is such a comfort to know he understands everything that means, because he lived here among us for that period of time. We have no tangible God to worship, but we do have the gospels, which give us tangible insights of Jesus in our world and this Christmas, like so many others which have gone before, we have the joy of knowing that he left his the Holy Spirit to hover over us, guiding and directing us to live and work as Jesus instructed us, to be true witnesses to our world of the loving kindness and value God places on each and every one of us. As we enjoy the reason for the season, let us thank God for his wonderful gift and sacrifice that enables us to be forgiven, redeemed people with hope and joy in our hearts.



Christine

A PRAYER TO USE DURING VACANCY

Heavenly Father we thank you for the ministry of Anne-Marie our previous rector, and we pray your presence and blessing upon her as she settles into her new post as Archdeacon of Morgannwg.

We ask now that you will help us

- to share responsibility,
- grow in faith,
- love one another,
- care for those in need,
- reach out to others,
- and welcome newcomers.

Lord Jesus, guard and grow our churches as we serve you together in this period without a rector. Be with all those in the ministry team who will lead us during the interregnum, and all of those whose unseen and unheralded work behind the scenes ensures that the work of Christ continues.

Please guide those who are seeking the right minister for us, and those who are seeking the right church for their ministry, that together we may discover your way for the future and see your kingdom grow.

Amen.



Christmas Services 2025

Tiptree, Great Braxted, Inworth & Messing



Christingle Services

Sunday 7th December
4.00pm at St. Luke's, Tiptree



Messy Church

Friday, 5th December,
from 3.00pm Messy Church after school until 5.30pm, at St Luke's
Church, Tiptree
Christmas crafts, a story, songs, prayers & a simple meal



Carol Services

Sunday 21st December,
11.15am, Carol Service, All Saints, Great Braxted
4.00pm, Carol Service, St Luke's Church, Tiptree
4.30pm, Carol Service, All Saints, Messing

Christmas Eve, Wednesday 24th December
6.30pm, Carol Service, All Saints Church, Inworth



Crib Service

Christmas Eve, Wednesday 24th December
4.00pm Crib Service at St Luke's Church, Tiptree
Collection in aid of Little Havens Children's Hospice



Midnight Communion Services

Christmas Eve, Wednesday, 24th December
11.30pm, Midnight Communion, St Luke's, Tiptree
11.30pm, Midnight Communion, All Saints, Messing



Christmas Day Services

Thursday, 25th December

Join us for Family Communion in one of our churches:

9.30am St Luke's, Tiptree 11.15am All Saints, Inworth
11.15am All Saints, Messing

We wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas

Archbishop Designate, Sarah Mullally, sets out her hopes for the Church

Shortly after the announcement of her nomination as the next Archbishop of Canterbury, Bishop Sarah Mullally delivered an address at Canterbury Cathedral, reflecting on her calling, the challenges facing the Church, and her hopes for its future.

Rooted in her early vocation as a nurse and shaped by her ministry in London, she spoke of “washing feet” as a guiding image of Christian service, and of finding hope in the quiet faithfulness of churches, chaplaincies, and communities across the Anglican Communion.

She addressed the Church’s responsibility in safeguarding, the need to confront power dynamics, and the importance of standing against hatred and antisemitism.

She said she would seek to be “a shepherd who enables everyone’s ministry and vocation to flourish,” and expressed her desire to nurture confidence in the Gospel. “Held fast by the Lord’s hand,” she concluded, “please pray for me as I will pray for you.”

Parish Pump

Churches are building 'coalitions of goodwill'- Archbishop of York

Churches bring people together in a world that can become ‘too easily’ polarised, the Archbishop of York has told a major conference highlighting the value of church buildings.

Archbishop Stephen spoke of the contribution that churches make to social cohesion, and called on the Government to make the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme – covering VAT on repairs – to be made permanent, saying that churches are “incredibly anxious” about the future of the “lifeline” scheme.

He said churches are not only places of worship but centres of social support, working with or providing a “staggering” number of social action projects – more than 31,000 - building coalitions of goodwill with people of all faiths and none, hosting services such as food banks, warm spaces, drop-ins and debt counselling.

He said there continued to be a need to “make the case” to Government over the Listed Places of Worship Grant scheme – which provides grants covering the VAT on repairs of more than £1,000. He said this had been a “lifeline” since it was first introduced more than 20 years ago by the then Chancellor Gordon Brown.

The LPWG scheme gives grants covering the VAT on repairs of more than £1,000 for listed places of worship. In January, the Government announced a one-year extension of the scheme but reduced the total amount of money available and introduced a £25,000 cap on the amount that can be claimed by a place of worship.

From Andy Butt

Tiptree Youth Project Outreach

Community Youth Worker



“Pray diligently. Stay alert, with your eyes wide open in gratitude. Don't forget to pray for us, that God will open doors for telling the mystery of Christ”. Two verses from the book of Colossians (4) as translated in The Message.

I'm grateful for those who take time to remember us as the Tiptree Youth Project informally through your prayers. I'm mindful that prayer needs to underpin all our activities as it's how God gets to hear what is truly on our hearts. And, I recognise that we haven't been very good at feeding you with topics and ideas for your prayers.

So that's why from the New Year expect to see a ramped up series of ways that you can pray for me, my colleagues and our activities at TYPO. We'll be start this with a simple sheet describing a topic that you can pray for us each day of the week. Later we'll be adding some more detail about specific events and things that we will be doing or want to do. And it won't just be me, you will be hearing from both Erika and Olga, plus my volunteers, will be contributing to this too.

We'll be making our materials available to you at Church, plus putting them on our new website www.tiptreeyp.org and our social media streams. But it would be great to know who was praying for us regularly, so can I encourage you to sign up to our new Prayer for TYPO Mailing List, by dropping me a note or seeing me or Wendy Borgartz at St Luke's, that way we can guarantee we will keep you up to date.

Finally, if you are reading this in December then may I take the opportunity to wish you a very Happy Christmas as we celebrate the birth of a baby whose presence amongst changed the world forever. And if it's January before you see this then my prayer for you is that you may enjoy a blessed and peaceful 2026.

Enjoy!

Andy Butt **Andy@typo.co.uk**



The Nicene Creed:

The Church and the Future

Canon Paul Hardingham

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

‘We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church’: The Creed affirms the four marks of the church, defining a truly orthodox Christian community:

one: despite the many different churches and traditions, there is only one Church to which we all belong. *‘There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.’* (Galatians 3:28).

holy: the church is a holy community set apart for God (*ekklesia*, lit *‘called out’*), whose mission is to reflect God’s holiness in worship and live out His love in the world.

catholic: this doesn’t refer to the Roman Catholic church, as the word means *‘universal’*, reminding us of the unity of the church across the whole world and all denominations.

The church aims to apply the same gospel in whatever situation, context or culture it finds itself.

Apostolic: The apostolic ministry of the church (*‘apostolos’*) is one of being sent to communicate the good news of the gospel: *‘Therefore go and make disciples of all nations.’* (Matt 28.19).

‘We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins’: As baptism is a sign of belonging to the church, it can only happen once. The issue addressed in the Creed is that of Christians who left during persecution, but wanted to be accepted back by rebaptism. It affirms the principle *‘one Lord, one faith, one baptism’* (Ephesians 4:5). Today, those baptised as children, theologically can’t be re-baptised to demonstrate an adult commitment. However, they can be confirmed or reaffirm their baptism vows.

‘We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come’: The Creed ends with a statement of hope, that we will share in Jesus’ resurrection life after death.

It is not simply about the immortality of our soul, but the resurrection of our bodies. They will be transformed to fit us for life of heaven for eternity: *‘The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable...it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.’* (1 Corinthians 15:42-44).

Trinitarian Faith

Finally, what about its significance today? The original Creed dates from 325 AD, but was expanded at the Council of Constantinople in 381. Over the last months we have seen how the Creed provides a *‘big picture’* of who God is and challenges our commitment to

him. Its value can be seen in three main areas:

The Nicene Creed stresses the need to believe the right thing:

Sadly, we often hear Christian leaders and churches denying the essential articles of the Christian Faith. To be a part of orthodox Christianity, we must believe in what is affirmed in the Nicene Creed. *‘For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures’* (1 Corinthians 15:3-5).

The Nicene Creed affirms the importance of the Trinity:

Generally, Christians give little thought to the Trinity, and many churches rarely teach on the subject. However, by regularly reciting the Nicene Creed, people are reminded of the doctrine about the triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It protects the truth about the Trinity, especially in opposition to Arianism, which sees Jesus as the first and greatest of God’s creatures, but not the same as God the Father.

To be a Christian is to be baptised in the triune name and to worship God, who is three persons in one Godhead: *‘Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit’* (Matthew 28:19).

The Nicene Creed focuses on God’s salvation:

At the heart of the Nicene Creed is the good news that Jesus came down from heaven *‘for our salvation’*. It understands Christianity as essentially being about sin and salvation, judgment and forgiveness, and new life in Jesus Christ.

This theme is very relevant at Christmas, when we celebrate the baby born in Bethlehem as our Saviour. As the angels said to the shepherds: *‘Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.’* (Luke 2:11,12).

Parish Pump

For how many minutes can you concentrate?

Most of us can watch television for only about 15 minutes, or read a book for about 14 minutes, before we lose our concentration. Most of us blame our social media notifications as the reason.

A recent survey by Perspectus Global for Lingo by Abbott, found that Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp and message alerts were named as the main culprits.

Overall, it seems we can focus for only 11 minutes on a virtual work call, or 13 minutes in a face-to-face meeting, or 12 minutes writing a work email.

We even seem to lose concentration at family gatherings, after only 14 minutes. Overall, four in five of us say that we get distracted easily, and that we lose our focus around eight times each day.

What about you? Why not take up the challenge, and ‘time’ your losses of concentration for a day?

Reflecting Faith: Listening to the gospel

The Revd Dr Jo White considers reading the gospel in church.

One of the highlights of the Christmas services is the reading of the opening passage from John's Gospel, 'In the beginning was the Word ...'

I love the poetry of the words and sentences, as well as their very meaning. In most churches everyone will stand for that reading, which emphasises its importance. But what makes it important?

Most gospel passages that are read in church include the words of Jesus Himself, handed down to us over the centuries, but here there are none. Rather, this is the defining statement of who Jesus is and where He came from.

The way that the gospel readings are valued by the Church can be seen in our church buildings over the years. In older churches you will find two lecterns, one either side of the central altar. The right-hand side is for the Old Testament and epistle readings, and the left-hand side lectern (as the congregation faces the altar) is for the gospel reading.

On the altar, the holder for the priest's book was physically moved to that side, so that as he read out the gospel he would be facing the northern side of the church. Traditionally that was the colder, darker side, thought to be 'least' holy and therefore in need of the gospel most.

Nowadays all readings may be given from the same place at the front of church, though in some churches the gospel book will be processed with or without candles, into the centre of the congregation, to bring us all gathering around Christ's words.

It is because of this absolute importance of the gospels that people face the gospel, so as it is processed, they move their body and heads towards it. This will leave some people with their backs to the altar for that time, but it is the 'Word made flesh' that we honour.



Take it easy on those country roads

Country roads may look inviting to drive, but the statistics tell a different story. For collisions on rural roads are around four times more likely to result in a fatality.

Such is the finding of the NFU Mutual Rural Road Safety Report 2024. It found that in 2023, an average of one in every 32 collisions on rural highways resulted in a death, compared to one in every 122 on urban roads. Overall, more than 18 people died on rural roads each week in 2023.

So - what is wrong? It seems it is the sheer number of hazards which motorists may face on a rural road. These include blind corners, narrow roads, road quality, poor visibility, cyclists, pedestrians, horse riders, mud and debris, loose livestock, agricultural vehicles, unexpected road or field entrances, impatient drivers, and Sat-Navs sending people down unsuitable roads.

It all adds up to one simple message: be careful and expect the unexpected on country roads.

Parish Pump

Parent & Toddlers at St Luke's

Meet here every
MONDAY morning
9.15am - 11.15am

(includes holidays, but not bank holidays) photo by Marcus Spiske Unsplash



Everyone welcome! Parents
or carers, grandparents,
friends and childminders.
Meet up, have a chat, relax and play!



There is a small charge of
£2.00 per family - drinks &
biscuits are included



Further information from Margaret Peek 01621 810804
or Maureen Horn 01621 817497

Songs of Praise and the nation's favourite school hymn

This autumn the BBC has been in the process of discovering our favourite school hymn. It gave the public a shortlist of 50 hymns to choose from.

The vote was organised by the BBC's Songs of Praise team, with an accompanying programme, The Big School Assembly Singalong, hosted by singer and presenter Aled Jones.

Aled Jones well remembers his school hymn days. "Every morning, we sat cross-legged on an uncomfortable wooden floor, which doubled up as our gym and school canteen.

"We would sing the songs that don't get sung in cathedrals, where I ended up, because they're perhaps seen as child-like, but actually that's what brought me into religious music in the first place.

"There's a joy in being able to sing these hymns that uplift you and make you feel out of this world, but back at school, it was even better to do it with mates. I think that these hymns and this collective singing just takes you back to an easier, simpler, safer time."

The vote was cast on 20th September, and were due to be announced on 23rd November, during the The Big School Assembly Singalong, held at the Victoria Hall in Bolton. On the night, a choir led by music teacher and TikTok star James B Partridge presented a range of school assembly classics.

Partridge said: "I think the school assembly songs that we sang as children have a special place in our heart. Having that experience of singing together as a community really brings back the joy of those childhood days."

The Winners were

1. Shine Jesus Shine
2. Give Me Oil in My Lamp (Sing Hosanna)
3. Lord of the Dance

Here is a full list of the hymns that the BBC offered. Which are your top five?

All Creatures of Our God and King	Give Me Oil in My Lamp (Sing Hosanna)
All Things Bright and Beautiful	Glad that I Live am I
Autumn Days	Gloria in Excelsis Deo (Clapping Gloria)
Bind Us Together	God Knows Me (There are hundreds of sparrows, thousands, millions...)
Black and White (The Ink is Black, the Page is White)	Go Tell It on the Mountain
Cauliflowers Fluffy (Paintbox)	He's Got the Whole World (He's Got the Whole World in his Hand)
Colours of Day (Light up the Fire)	He Who Would Valiant Be (To Be a Pilgrim)
Conkers!	If I had a Hammer
Cross over the Road	If I were a Butterfly
Do not be Afraid, for I Have Redeemed You	I, the Lord of Sea and Sky (Here I am Lord)
From the Tiny Ant	

I Watch the Sunrise
Kum ba yah (Kumbaya)
Lord of all Hopefulness
Lord of the Dance
Make Me a Channel of Your Peace
Mine Eyes have seen the Glory of the coming of the Lord
Morning has Broken
My Lighthouse
Oh Jesus I have Promised
One More Step (One More Step Along the World I Go)
Peace, Perfect Peace
Praise Him (Praise him in the morning)
Shine, Jesus, Shine
Sing it in the Valleys
Spirit of God as Strong as the Wind

Thank you, Lord
The Building Song (All Over the World)
The Lord's my Shepherd
The Wise Man Built his House upon the Rock
Think of a World (Think of a World without any Flowers)
This Little Light of Mine
Water of Life
We are Climbing
We Plough the Fields and Scatter
When a Knight Won his Spurs
When I Needed a Neighbour
Who put the Colours in the Rainbow?
Who's the King of the Jungle?
You Shall Go Out with Joy

Parish Pump

And there were shepherds...

In his gospel, Luke tells how the shepherds in the fields were keeping watch over their flocks when they were terrified by the sudden arrival of heavenly angels, surrounded by the glory of the Lord. And the message of the angel that night has rung down the centuries:

"I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." (Luke 2:10,11)

And so, the first people to greet the Saviour were not rich VIPs, but humble shepherds. And in turn, it was the shepherds who became the first evangelists: for they would have gone home to their families and neighbours that night with the amazing news of what they had seen.

Meanwhile, for Mary there followed a time of reflection. She gathered up in her mind all her impressions, and all that the shepherds had shared about the angelic visit. She knew it was treasure, and not to be squandered. Then she quietly pondered in her heart the meaning and significance of all that had happened, so that she would never forget.

Exuberant witness and quiet contemplation are not opposites. They are, in fact, good companions in the spiritual life!

So, this Christmas, let's be filled with the joy that the Saviour has also been born 'to us'. May our lives reflect the glory of His coming, even in a small way. May our interactions with friends, colleagues and families during this Advent season reflect the great joy that the angels brought that night, so long ago.

Book the Hall

for your meeting, group or event

we are in St Luke's Church Extension, St Luke's Church,
Church Road, Tiptree, CO5 0SU



**Good rates and
improved facilities!**



Hourly Rate:

£20 - regular bookings

£23 - one-off bookings

both including use of all facilities & kitchen

Wi-fi available for group leaders or speakers

(discuss your needs when making your booking)



Bookings & Enquiries to:

Gareth Williams: 01621 818069

Email: hall.stlukestiptree@btinternet.com

Why not give us a call?

We now have a Facebook Page www.facebook.com/tiptreechurchhall/

Regular Hall Bookings, at St Luke's:

For all hall bookings call Gareth Williams

01621 818069

Email: hall.stlukestiptree@btinternet.com

Weekly	Morning:	Afternoon	Evening
Monday	Parent & Toddlers; Chair Yoga		
Tuesday	Tiptree Volunteers Coffee Morning, (2 nd & 4 th Tues)	Chair Pilates, Up in Lights Dance Academy	
Wednesday	Slimming World, WEA (autumn/winter)		regular private booking
Thursday	Sound Collective Coffee Morning & Choir	U3A Choir (2 nd & 4 th Thurs)	
Friday	Tiptree Art Club	Chair Pilates	
Sunday	Coffee after Service	KYDS Youth Drama Society	
Monthly			
Sunday	Sunday Club (3 rd Sunday morning)		
Tuesday	Little City (1 st Tuesday morning)		
Wednesday	U3A Line Dance (2 nd Wednesday afternoon) Tai Chi 2.30 pm (3 rd Wednesday) & 1.30 pm (4 th Wednesday)		
	Tiptree Tiplers (3 rd evening in month)		
Thursday	U3A History (1 st afternoon), Tiptree Garden Club (1 st evening), Flower Club (2 nd evening), St Luke's Ladies Group (3 rd evening)		
Friday	Messy Church (1 st Friday afternoon), Priory Heath WI (2 nd Friday afternoon in the month) Games Afternoon (4 th Friday afternoon)		

If you are interested in making contact with any of the groups listed, please contact the Hall Bookings Administrator on hall.stlukestiptree@btinternet.com

Find us on Facebook:  / tiptreechurchhall

October 2025

Can You Help?

The PCC is currently looking at some potentially expensive fabric work on the Church including replacing the electrical system as it is getting past it's use by date and the Church roof. The expected costs of this work is beyond the finances of the PCC and if we hope to get the work done we will need to apply for grants towards the cost.

The PCC are looking for someone who can research the grants that may be available, the criteria for those grants and who can then complete the necessary forms in order to apply. If this is something that may interest you, and that you feel able to do, please speak to Clive Eastbrook





St Luke's Church

LUNCH AT THE NEW TIMES

Meet up with us for lunch, company & a chat, 12 Noon on the Fourth Monday in the month at:
The New Times, 87 Maldon Road, Tiptree, CO5 0BN

Monday 25th August	22nd September
27th October	24th November
22nd December (Christmas Lunch)	

No need to book, just turn up at 12 noon and order from the menu of the day.

Cost: £14.50 for a Two course Lunch & hot drink

Christmas Lunch – more details to follow

Contact Christine & David Eaton to find out more:
01621 819166 Email: christine.gorringe@btinternet.com

Photo by Rob Wicks on Unsplash





St Luke's Church

COFFEE AT THE NEW TIMES




Join us after morning service on Thursdays

Meet up with us for coffee, chat and fellowship at The New Times each Thursday from 11am

Come along meet new people, good company & conversation. Just turn up.

We are at: The New Times, 87 Maldon Road, Tiptree, CO5 0BN

Contact Christine & David Eaton to find out more:
01621 819166 Email: christine.gorringe@btinternet.com

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FoSL Committee



The Friends of St Luke's Events committee are looking for some new members to join their team.

We meet on a Monday afternoon approximately every 6 weeks, currently in the hall and other than that, we would like you to help organise some of our events. You do not need to be present at every event but helping out at some would be required. We hold a variety of events throughout the year, from our monthly board games afternoons, to evening quizzes, dances and other such events.

Some of our events are in conjunction with the church but others are stand-alone. Our aim to raise money to keep St Luke's hall in tip top condition. Our current project is to raise money to get the church driveway re-tarmaced.

Although preferred, you do not need to be a regular member of the congregation to join the committee. We currently have a mixed group of congregation members and villagers alike.

If you would like to be part of our committee or initially just have a chat to see if it is for you, please contact Sandra Redgewell on foslbookings@gmail.com

Sullivan – of Gilbert and Sullivan

Tim Lenton looks back on an internationally loved composer of light opera.

Some 125 years ago, on 22nd November 1900, Arthur Sullivan, the British composer, died. Best known for his collaborations with the dramatist W S Gilbert on light operas including *HMS Pinafore* and *The Pirates of Penzance*, he also wrote the music to the hymn *Onward, Christian Soldiers*.

Sullivan was born in 1832 in Lambeth. His Irish-born father Thomas was a military bandmaster, clarinettist and music teacher who, from 1845 to 1857 was based at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, where his son became proficient on many of the band's instruments and composed an anthem, *By the Waters of Babylon*, when he was eight.

Arthur was drawn to classical and spiritual music of various kinds, and his huge success with Gilbert was awkward for him, as he often felt – encouraged by certain reviewers and others – that he was “capable of higher art”. He was knighted by Queen Victoria in 1883, and the musical establishment felt this should end his involvement with comic opera.

Sullivan was inclined to agree, but he was also aware of the quality - and popularity - of his work with Gilbert. He had told an American reporter in 1879: "His ideas are as suggestive for music as they are quaint and laughable. His numbers ... always give me musical ideas."

By 1885 the duo had completed *The Mikado*, their most successful work, which ran for 672 performances.

Sullivan never married, though he had close relationships with a number of women, including the American socialite and singer Fanny Ronalds. He was devoted to his mother and also to his nephews and nieces after his brother Fred died at an early age.

Persistent kidney disease often meant that Sullivan had to conduct sitting down. He died of heart failure following bronchitis. His *Te Deum Laudamus* was performed posthumously.

Parish Pump

Are you dreading some Christmas presents?

Do you expect to like all the presents you will receive this year? Not if last year was anything to go by... It seems that many of us expect to unwrap at least one item that we don't want this Christmas.

What do you do with those weird gifts? Some of us admit to dumping them – straight into the bin. (Yet we are very polite about it – and pretend delight so that we do not hurt anyone's feelings.) A better way of getting rid of unwanted presents is to donate them to charity.

A Quiz on the year 2025

We are going with multiple choice questions this year. No “ask a friend” or “phone the audience”, sorry. No prizes for pointless answers or can you beat the chaser.

1. Ashley, Bert and Conall were:
 - *Names of storms*
 - *Names of Eurovision entrants*
 - *Names of footballers*
2. There was a re-wilding lynx project this year. Was it:
 - *A new golf course*
 - *Releasing cats in the wild*
 - *Releasing aftershave*
3. Palmerston the former resident cat at the Foreign Office was brought out of retirement for a “purr-fect” diplomatic posting to where:
 - *Belfast*
 - *Bermuda*
 - *Birmingham*
4. What is President Trump’s favourite word?
 - *Tariffs*
 - *Musk*
 - *Sorry*
5. We celebrated the 200th anniversary of the start of modern railways. The East- West Rail Link is due to be opened next year between Oxford, Milton Keynes and eventually Cambridge. What was the nick name of the original line?
 - *The Varsity Line*
 - *The Farcical Line*
 - *The Gravy Train*
6. Donald Trump called King Charles “aman”
 - *Young*
 - *Regal*
 - *Beautiful*
7. Restaurants in Pozzuoli Italy cooked up a plan to attract customers who are being put off by 1800 land tremors a month. How long did they have to stay?
 - *Until paid bill*
 - *Until dessert served*
 - *Until coffee served*
8. Birmingham experienced ‘Binmageddon’. Was it
 - *Shortage of bin bags*
 - *Too many bin bags*
 - *Bin collector strike*

9. A singer was joined by Bezos's fiancée Lauren Sánchez, CBS presenter Gayle King, former Nasa rocket scientist Aisha Bowe, civil rights activist Amanda Nguyen, and film producer Kerianne Flynn for a space trip. The flight lasted around 11 minutes and took the six women more than 100km (62 miles) above Earth, crossing the internationally recognised boundary of space and giving them a few moments of weightlessness. What music accompanied them?
- *Louis Armstrong's What a Wonderful World.*
 - *Fly me to the Moon*
 - *Up, up and Away?*
10. A big hit at the cinema early this year the film was *Conclave*. If you have not seen it is recommended. What colour is the smoke used to signify the election of a new Pope?
- *White*
 - *Black*
 - *Grey*
11. What was Doge that Elon Musk was associated with and then left?
- *Department of Government Elasticity*
 - *Department of Government Efficiency*
 - *Department of Government Energy*
12. Loretta Swit passed away this year. What long running sitcom is she best known for?
- *Friends*
 - *Mash*
 - *Frasier*
13. UK proposed a wider ban on destructive bottom trawling. Is it:
- *Anti-social behaviour*
 - *Long trousers*
 - *A type of fishing*
14. Which composer whose centenary was marked this year invented 'furniture music'? He always kept a hammer in his pocket for fear of muggers and once even founded his own church
- *Frank Sinatra*
 - *Jean Sibelius*
 - *Erik Satie*
15. What were the "mushroom murders" in Australia?
- *Killing by adding fungi to dinner guests' meals*
 - *Illegally picking mushrooms from fields*
 - *Killing someone in vegetable aisle at supermarket*
16. Which of the following were not Proms this year?
- *The Shipping forecast prom*
 - *The Traitors prom*
 - *The Grand Prix prom*
17. 'Skibidi' "Delulu" and 'tradwife' were among words added to the Cambridge Dictionary. What does delulu mean?
- *French*
 - *Delusional*
 - *Incontinent*

A Quiz on the year 2025 - continued

18. Heartthrob Terence Stamp passed away this year, which part did he play in the 1960s film of *Far from the Madding Crowd*?
- *Sgt Troy*
 - *Farmer Boldwood*
 - *Gabriel Oak*
19. What month does Oktober Beerfest in Germany start?
- *October*
 - *September*
 - *November*
20. In October a lady in Kew was given a fine of £150.00 for pouring what down a drain on a road? The council later withdrew the penalty notice.
- *Beer*
 - *Oil*
 - *Coffee*

Hope you have a:

- *Happy Christmas*
- *Merry Christmas*
- *Peaceful Christmas!*

Answers on page 42

Parish Pump

Men's curious reluctance to ask where they are going

If you are travelling far this Christmas, pray that your satnav works, or that there is a woman in the car. Research has found that men are so reluctant to ask directions that they waste hours and miles every year. Over a lifetime of travel, it can work out to a wasted journey from Land's End to John O' Groats.

Very few men will ask for help or check a map to avoid unnecessary travel. They prefer to wander hopefully until they find their route on their own, regardless of how long it takes them.

Which of course has inspired the joke: Why did the Children of Israel wander in the wilderness for 40 years? Because Moses was a man and wouldn't ask directions...

Put together a Memory Book

Do you have grandchildren? Then this winter, during those long dark days, why not spend some time putting together a sort of scrapbook of memories to pass on to them?

Things you might like to include could be: where you lived when you were a child; what your school was like, what games you most enjoyed, who your best buddies were, what pets you had, what your first job was, and how you met your partner. What was your first car, and where was your first home as an adult? Add a selection of photographs that you have from the past.



Messy Church !



Join us here at
St Luke's Church:
after school on

Friday 5th December

Friday 6th February

Friday 6th March

from 3 pm to 5.30 pm

For:

**A simple
meal**

Songs

Friends

Games



Activities

Stories

Crafts

a short service

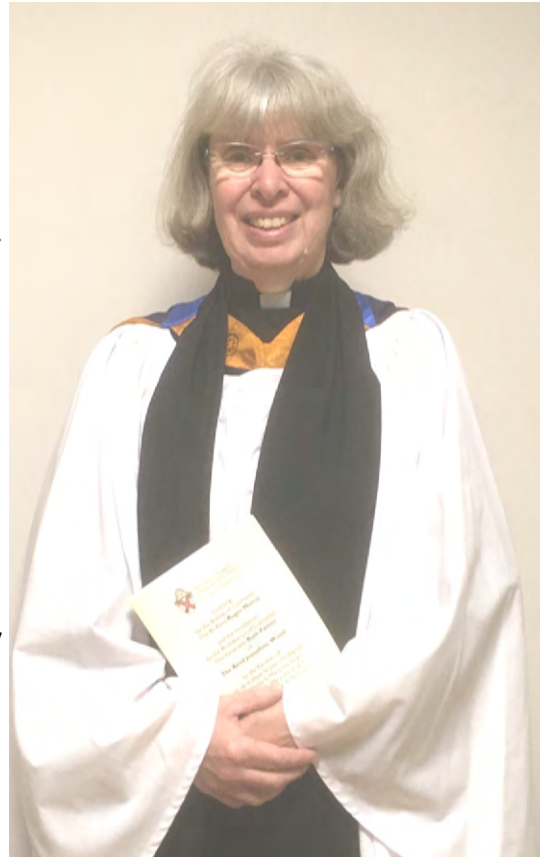
St Luke's Church, Church Road Tiptree, CO5 0SU

 Find us on Facebook: /tiptreestlukes

Jo Wood's Licensing

On Tuesday 4th November, a special service was held at St John the Baptist Church, Layer de la Haye for the licensing and installation of Reverend Jo Wood as Curate-in-Charge (Team Vicar Designate) for the parishes of Layer de la Haye, Salcott, Tollesbury, Tolleshunt D'Arcy and Tolleshunt Major. The Bishop of Colchester, The Rt Revd Roger Morris; the Archdeacon of Colchester, The Venerable Ruth Patten; and the Area Dean, Revd Canon Simon Garwood, officiated at the presentation of our new minister.

The congregation included representatives from the churches, schools and communities across the Waterside parishes and from the wider Team Ministry and Witham Deanery. Together with Jo's family, friends and colleagues from previous parishes, we witnessed her declaration and oaths and licensing by the Bishop of Colchester. We prayed and welcomed Jo saying 'May the Lord richly bless you and make you a blessing among us.'



Celebrations continued after the service with delicious refreshments in the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Layer de la Haye.

Many thanks to everyone involved with organising a memorable evening.

Revd. Jo writes:

I would like to add my personal thanks to the many people who helped to organise, support and take part in the Licensing service on 4th November. It was a hugely joyful occasion and I am grateful for your warm and enthusiastic welcome. I am looking forward to settling in and getting to know people across the five parishes where I will be serving as Team Vicar.

As well as marking a new beginning for me personally, the service marked the start of a new chapter for each of the parishes too, as we come together into a new group, which is to be known as the Waterside Parishes. Whilst being part of this new group of parishes, we will continue to maintain our links with other parishes in the existing Blackwater Benefice and the Thurstable and Winstree Team Ministry, reminding us that we are all part of the one big family of the Christian church.

One of the hymns we sang at the Licensing Service included these words:

We are pilgrims on a journey,

*and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.*

It was moving to sing these words with friends and colleagues who have accompanied me on various different parts of my own journey through life, as well as many of the people with whom I will share the next stage of the journey. It reminded me that, whatever changes we experience on our journey through life, God not only promises to be with us and walk alongside us, but provides us with companions to share the journey. As we begin this new stage of our journey within the Waterside Parishes, may God give us grace to be good companions, sharing our joys and sorrows, helping and supporting one another on the way. And may God bless each one of us and make us a blessing to one another and to those we journey alongside day by day.



Friends 
of St Luke's, Tiptree



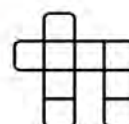
Games Afternoon

4th Friday, Every Month, 2-4pm

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Includes Biscuits, Coffee, Tea,
& Good Company!

Rummikub, Cribbage, Scrabble, Mahjong, Cluedo...
and many more Games available



Attendance at Church of England churches rises for the fourth year in a row

Attendance at Church of England churches grew for the fourth year in a row last year, statistics have confirmed.

The overall number of regular worshippers across the Church of England's congregations rose to 1.009 million in 2024, a rise of 0.6 per cent, according to the annual Statistics for Mission findings.

It was the second year in a row in which the Church of England's "worshipping community" – the combined number of regular members of local congregations – has stood above a million since the Covid-19 pandemic.

All age average attendance on a Sunday also rose 1.5 per cent to 581,000 in 2024, extending rises over recent years.

And overall attendance across the week edged upwards by 1.6 cent in a year, and stood at just over 702,000 last year, according to the figures.

The increase was driven by a recovery in attendance by adults (over 16), among whom average Sunday attendance was up by 1.8 per cent and weekly attendance rose by 1.8 per cent.

The 2024 figures showed that adult baptisms rose to 8,700 in 2024 compared to 7,800 the previous year. There was also a rise in the number of young people, aged between 11 and 17 years old who were baptised, from 2,100 in 2023 to 2,400 last year. Confirmations also rose by 5.3 per cent from 10,700 to 11,300.

While the overall figures show that in-person attendance has not fully reached pre-pandemic levels, the figures suggest it is moving closer to the projected pre-pandemic trend and in some cases has risen above the levels that might have been expected had there been no pandemic.

Parish Pump

Help our woodlands

If you've been admiring the glories of autumn, and have any time to spare, why not consider volunteering to help the Woodland Trust, the UK's leading woodland conservation charity?

The Trust looks after more than 1,000 woods and groups of woods. The Trust also campaigns to protect and save more ancient woodland from destructive development. It always needs volunteers to help in a wide variety of ways. For details, visit:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk>

Smile

Careful!

There was a very gracious lady who was mailing the old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. "Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk.

The lady thought for a moment. "Only the Ten Commandments."

Morning

There are two kinds of people in the world. There are those who wake up in the morning and say, "Good morning, Lord," and there are those who wake up in the morning and say, "Good Lord, it's morning."

Hear, hear

A very deaf elderly man was finally fitted out with a hearing aid that really worked. A month later his doctor called him in for a check-up. "Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again."

The gentleman replied, "Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to the conversations. I've changed my will three times!"

Duck

I have a severe nonlinear waterfowl issue. (I don't have all my ducks in a row.)

Somebody just threw a handful of Omega 3 tablets at me! It's okay, I only suffered super fish oil injuries.

True story

The nativity play was going as planned and Joseph and Mary were going from 'house' to 'house' knocking on the doors and asking if there was any room for them.

As they continued to get 'no room' answers, a little voice called from the back of the church: "You should have booked!"

Keep it a surprise

Three-year-old Lily was helping her mother wrap a present for her father. While wrapping, her mother told Lily about keeping the present a secret so it would be a surprise. After the present was wrapped, Lily proudly put it under the tree.

When her father asked her if he could shake it and guess what's inside, she said very seriously, "No, that's not possible. T-shirts don't rattle."

Footballer's carol

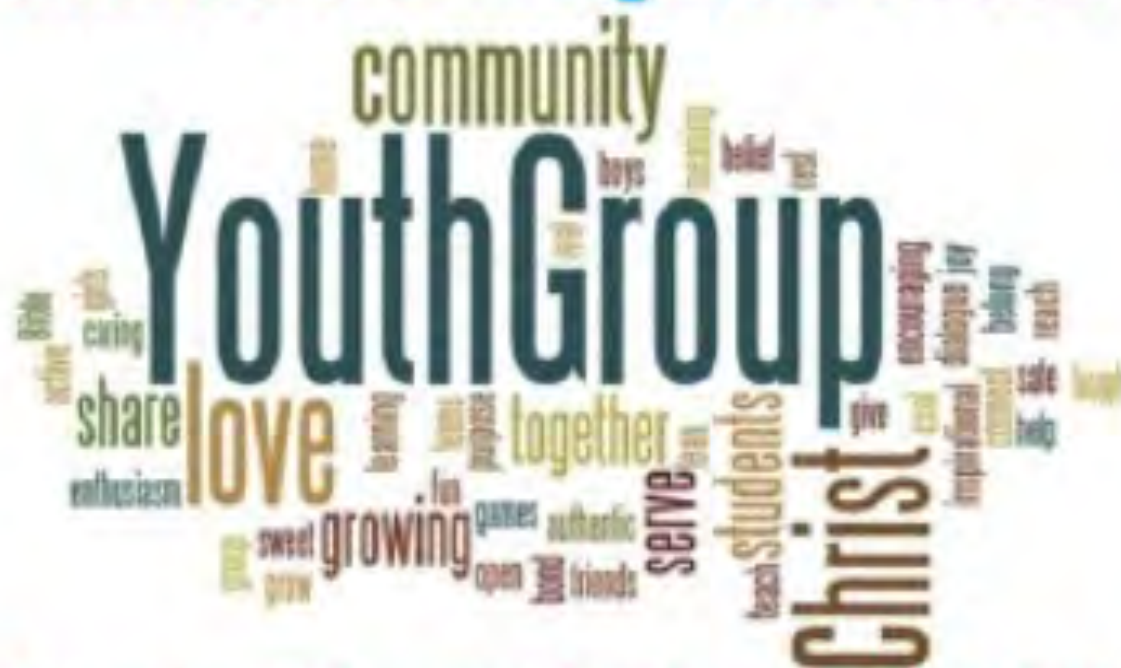
A football supporter's favourite Christmas song? 'Yule never walk alone'.

Let's play

Four-year-old to her two-year-old sister: "Let's play Christmas. I'll be Father Christmas, and you can be a present and I'll give you away."

CITY

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for young people in school years 7* – 11 (ages
11 – 16) * open to year 6 from Easter**

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Churches In Tiptree Youth

Books of the Bible

Canon Paul Hardingham

Ephesians

Paul wrote the letter of Ephesians around AD 60, while in prison at Rome. It was probably a circular letter to be read in the house churches of Ephesus and the local area. Paul founded the church over a period of three years (Acts 19:1-20:1) between 52-55 AD. Ephesus was the leading city and commercial centre in the region, famous for its temple to the goddess Artemis (Diana).

Paul's aim in writing his letter was to help his readers understand the dimensions of God's purpose and grace for them and His eternal plan for the church. The believers needed to understand their status *'in Christ'* and the call to live a life worthy of Christ. Ephesians is divided into two halves: chapters 1-3 concern theological issues, while chapters 4-6 deal with the practical outworking of faith.

Having shown God's purpose for the church, Paul shows how God has reconciled individuals to Himself by grace (2:1–10). He has reconciled people to each other by breaking down the barriers through Christ's death (2:11–22). This is the *'mystery'* revealed by Paul (3:1–13) and he shows how Christ's gifts promote unity and maturity (4:1–16). The believer's new life stands in contrast to the old way of life without Christ (4:17–6:20).

The great overarching theme of the letter is that we are rescued by God not just for our personal benefit, but to bring praise and glory to Him in our lives: *'He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment – to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.'* (1:9,10).

Philippians

This letter was written to Christians in the Macedonian city of Philippi when Paul was in prison, probably in Rome (60-62 AD). His primary purpose in writing was to thank them for the gift they had sent him upon learning of his imprisonment. However, he also uses the letter as an opportunity to report on his situation; to encourage the Philippians to stand firm in the face of persecution and rejoice regardless of circumstances; to exhort the church to live in humility, fellowship, and unity; to commend Epaphroditus and Timothy to them; and to warn them about false teaching. This included Judaizers who were persuading the Philippians to submit to circumcision.

The central message of Philippians focuses on joy (the word occurs some 16 times!). For Paul, joy isn't simply an emotional response to favourable circumstances. True joy is to be found through a relationship with the resurrected and glorified Christ. Death ceases

to be an enemy, because through it we can more fully enjoy the presence of Jesus. This joy is also rooted in an expectation of the return of Jesus, which gives urgency to the task of sharing the gospel. So, Paul begins his letter by thanking the Philippians for their partnership together in the work of the gospel through the offerings they have sent.

Paul also powerfully appeals to the Philippians to be of '*one mind*' in pursuing humility and unity. He gives the example of Jesus himself '*who made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant*' (2:7) to the point of dying the death of a common criminal. '*Therefore*', say Paul, '*God exalted him to the highest place*' (2:9). This 'Jesus attitude' is the one that all believers should share.

Parish Pump

Actual children's versions of Christmas Carols:

"...sleep in heavenly peas"

"Joy to the world, the Saviour rains!"

"Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plane..."

"While shepherds washed their socks by night..."

"Deck the Halls with Buddy Holly..."


"We three kings of porridge and tar..."

"On the first day of Christmas my tulip gave to me..."



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Your first parish

The Rectory
St James the Least



My dear Nephew Darren

And so, the old year draws to a close, and you are packing to move to your own first parish in January. Let me give you some final words of advice.

Curates, you will have noticed, are forgiven everything. I hope you have appreciated this period of grace, because come 1st January, all that will change. You will then become responsible for everything that goes wrong in your church. You must be able to mend leaking taps, shovel snow, arrange flowers, mow the churchyard and run jumble sales. You will be expected to know the moment someone falls ill – preferably the day before. In addition, they will expect you to preach profound sermons - in seven minutes flat, and to lead a life of prayerful solitude while being the life and soul of the parish. From the day your predecessor left, he will have turned into a saint. *You* will be their new disappointment. Be assured that *whatever* you do, you will *always* disappoint someone.

Be prepared for phone calls at 3am telling you that someone has left a light on in church, and shouldn't you go turn and it off? You will be asked about car parking arrangements for the October Harvest Service by mid-January, while hymns for the 9 Lessons and Carols will be required by early summer. I suggest you buy in extra pullovers, overcoats and scarves for life in your vicarage. A good number of mousetraps may well come in useful too.

Welcome to your new life of an incumbent.

Expect that each Sunday morning, as you prepare for the service, there will be a straggling queue of people who want to tell you an astonishing variety of things: there is a large cobweb 30 feet up over the pulpit, they don't like the second hymn on the board, the flowers look rough this week, there may be a bat in the vestry, some child has left a shoe in the back porch, and the car park has broken glass in it.

You may find this a distraction as you prepare for a worship service. But remember that at least they have bothered to come to church at all. In my experience, congregations are always irritating, but at least they do take up a lot of space, and that looks good in the pews. The church would look empty without them.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

Jane Austin – still loved 250 years later

by Tim Lenton

It was 250 years ago, on 16th December 1775, that novelist Jane Austen (*Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey*, *Persuasion*) was born. Over 30 million copies of her books have since been sold – 7000 in her lifetime.

She was the second daughter and seventh child of the Revd George Austen, rector of the village of Steventon in Hampshire. Two of her brothers became clergymen, two were Admirals in the Royal Navy and the other inherited substantial estates in Kent and Hampshire from a distant cousin. Neither Jane nor her sister Cassandra, with whom she was very close, ever married.

Jane had a sincere Christian faith which deepened as she got older and is reflected in her novels. She had sympathy with hands-on evangelicalism and a desire to abolish the slave trade, which she refers to particularly in *Mansfield Park*.

She lived at Steventon for 25 years and then moved with her parents and sister to Bath, enjoying holidays in the West Country. Her father died in 1805, and they moved to Southampton and then Chawton in Hampshire, less than 20 miles from Steventon, where they had a cottage on one of her brother Edward's estates – now a Jane Austen museum. This cottage was where she devoted herself to writing, revising her first three novels and composing another three.

But it was here too that she fell ill and died in 1817 – probably from Addison's Disease. She had been published only anonymously in her lifetime, and her style was not immediately appreciated, though its comments on the world of the landed gentry, to which she belonged, quickly became popular – as did her wit, irony and her realistic plots.

She is now more popular than ever, with followers known as Janeites and a flourishing Jane Austen Society with worldwide membership, plus numerous film and TV adaptations of her work.

There are some gaps in her private life, mainly because her sister Cassandra destroyed most of her letters. At the age of 20 she seems to have fallen temporarily for Thomas Lefroy, a neighbour who later became Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, but the relationship never developed. The epitaph by her brother James on her tomb in Winchester Cathedral praises the "extraordinary endowments of her mind".

Parish Pump

All in the month of December

It was

65 years ago, on 9th Dec 1960 that the first episode of the TV soap *Coronation Street* was broadcast on ITV.

30 years ago, on 15th Dec that the European Council announced that the new European currency would be called the Euro.

250 years ago, on 16th Dec 1775 that Jane Austen, novelist (*Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey*, *Persuasion*) was born. Over 30 million copies of her books have been sold, 7,000 of them in her lifetime.

60 years ago, on 22nd Dec 1965 that Richard Dimbleby, journalist and radio-television broadcaster, died. The BBC's first war correspondent, he was one of the greatest figures in British broadcasting history. Father of the TV presenters David Dimbleby and Jonathan Dimbleby.

30 years ago, on 22nd Dec 1995 that the British 'rogue trader' Nick Leeson was jailed for six and a half years in Singapore for fraudulent financial dealings which had led to the fall of Barings Bank.

All in the month of January

It was

225 years ago, on 1st January 1801 that Ireland was added to Great Britain by the Act of Union thus creating the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

220 years ago, on 9th January 1806 that Admiral Lord Nelson was buried at St Paul's Cathedral.

90 years ago, on 20th January 1936 that King George V died aged 71.

50 years ago, on 21st January 1976 that Concord began passenger service flights from London to Bahrain and Paris to Rio de Janeiro, cruising at twice the speed of sound and at 60,000 feet.

125 years ago, on 22nd January 1901 that Queen Victoria died after reigning for 64 years.

100 years ago, on 27th January 1926 that inventor John Logie Baird demonstrates his new television machine to members of the Royal Institution in London.

40 years ago, on 28 January 1986 that the US Space Shuttle *Challenger* exploded 74 seconds into its flight killing all 7 astronauts.

Wordsearch

Did the Old Testament expect Jesus to come? Yes indeed! Here are just some examples of OT prophecies:

He would be born of a virgin. ‘The virgin will conceive and give birth to a Son and will call Him Immanuel.’ (Isaiah 7:14)

He would be born in Bethlehem. ‘But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel...’ (Micah 5:2)

His lineage would be of the line of David. ‘I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.’ (Jeremiah 23:5-6).

He would bring healing. ‘Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy.’ (Isaiah 35:5–6)

He would be crucified. They pierce my hands and my feet. All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment. (Psalm 22)

He would rise from the dead. ‘You will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay...’ (Psalm 16: 8-11)



Born
Virgin
Immanuel
Bethlehem
Ruler

Israel
David
King
Just
Right

Healing
Blind
Deaf
Lame
Mute

Crucified
Pierce
Hands
Feet
Gloat

Rise
Dead
Abandon
Decay
Realm

10 Fun Facts about Christmas trees

These come from the website of The British Christmas Tree Growers Association (BCTGA).

- Even before the time of Christ, evergreen trees were seen in winter as a symbol of fertility.
- It was the 16th century monk, Martin Luther, who is credited with the idea of having lights on Christmas trees. He added candles to his tree, to look like stars in a forest.
- Windsor Castle got its first Christmas tree in 1800, brought by Charlotte, wife of George III.
- It was in 1835 that the term 'Christmas tree' was first used in English.
- It was in the 1840s, when Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria, began bringing trees inside, that led to their popularity throughout the UK.
- It was Woolworths who first sold manufactured Christmas tree ornaments – back in 1880.
- The tree in London's Trafalgar Square has been a gift from the city of Oslo, Norway since 1947.
- The world's tallest Xmas tree, at 221ft high, was erected in a Washington shopping mall in 1950.
- In a survey of the nation's favourite smells, real Christmas trees came eighth, just behind the sea, but ahead of perfume.
- About five million real Christmas trees are sold in the UK each year.



28th December: Holy Innocents

The death of a very young child is perhaps the hardest grief of all to bear. So the 28th December is a very poignant day in the church calendar. It is when the worldwide Church joins with bereaved parents to grieve the loss of babies and young children. For Holy Innocents day recalls the massacre of the young male children of Bethlehem by Herod the Great.

Herod had been told by the Magi, or Wise Men, that a great king had been born in Bethlehem, and he felt shaken. How could a child in unimportant little Bethlehem be so powerful that the stars in the night sky honoured His birth?! Herod took the Magi so seriously that he decided to try and kill this new young rival. He decreed that every male baby of two years and under should be killed. (Matthew 2:1-18).

Bethlehem was not a large place, and Bible commentators estimate that between six and 25 infants were slaughtered by Roman soldiers. Their mothers were inconsolable at the death of their babies, as indeed mothers have always been.

The death of these innocent baby boys of Bethlehem became a feast-day in the western Church by the 4th century. This was because the Church considered them to be martyrs because they not only died *for* Christ, *but instead of* Christ.

Down the centuries, the tragic loss of the Holy Innocents has touched the imagination and hearts of poets, preachers and artists. Though heart-broken parents still grieve today, the Church can offer them one firm assurance: that young children who die to this world will undoubtedly "this day be with Me in Paradise." The One who eagerly said "Suffer the little children to *come unto Me*" will be the last person to turn them away.

Parish Pump



"Goodness! is it time for Christmas Fair organising, carol service planning and nativity play rehearsals already?!"



Sara preferred to let people work out the hymns for themselves

Those Christmas cards...

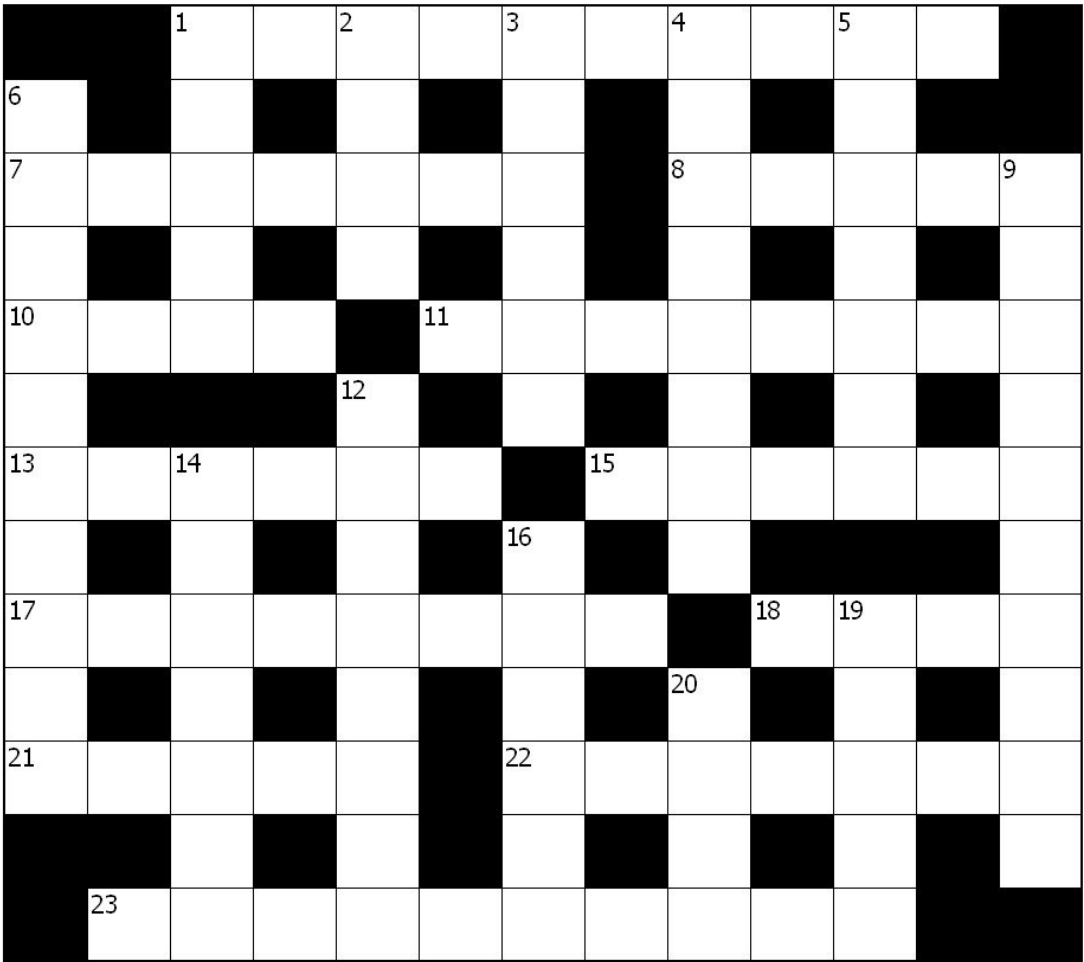
We send an estimated 900 million to 1 billion Christmas cards in the UK each year. Royal Mail delivers around 150 million. On average, each person in the UK sends and receives about 17 cards.

This year the final Royal Mail Christmas posting dates are as follows:

- Wednesday, December 17th: 2nd Class and 2nd Class Signed For
- Friday, December 19th: Royal Mail Tracked 48
- Saturday, December 20th: 1st Class and 1st Class Signed For
- Sunday, December 21st: Royal Mail Tracked 24
- Tuesday, December 23rd: Special Delivery Guaranteed.

(It is best to post as early as possible to avoid the last-minute rush.)

Crossword



Across

- 1 Provisional meeting place of God and the Jews (Exodus 25:9) (10)
- 7 David's third son, killed when his head got caught in a tree during a battle with his father (2 Samuel 18:14,15) (7)
- 8 They ruled much of the west coast of South America in the 15th and early 16th centuries (5)
- 10 Small deer of European and Asian extraction (4)
- 11 Seized control of (Numbers 21:25) (8)
- 13 Terror (Luke 24:5) (6)
- 15 First World War heroine shot by the Germans in Brussels, Nurse Edith (6)
- 17 Stormy (8)
- 18 A bitter variety of this, together with lamb and unleavened bread, was the Passover menu for anyone unclean (Numbers 9:11) (4)
- 21 Arson (anag.) (5)
- 22 How John Newton described God's grace in his well-known hymn (7)
- 23 Habitation (Isaiah 27:10) (10)

Down

- 1 and see that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8) (5)
- 2 The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as ... as a lion (Proverbs 28:1) (4)
- 3 One of the exiles, a descendant of Parosh, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:25) (6)
- 4 He escaped from Nob when Saul killed the rest of his family and joined David (1 Samuel 22:19,20) (8)
- 5 City and lake in Central Switzerland (7)
- 6 Offer your bodies as living , holy and pleasing to God (Romans 12:1) (10)
- 9 Pouches carried by horses (Genesis 49:14) (10)
- 12 One who accepts government by God (8)
- 14 Aromatic substance commonly used in Jewish ritual (Exodus 30:1) (7)
- 16 He asked Jesus, 'What is truth?' (John 18:38) (6)
- 19 Are (Romans 13:1) (5)
- 20 You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will ... his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21) (4)

Tiptree Guild of Beer and Wine Makers

Tiptree Tipplers



Meeting here every 3rd Wednesday
7.30pm for 8.00pm

A fun night out in a friendly atmosphere
Themed nights – see list

Why not come along & give us a try- no commitment
New members always welcomed
Annual membership only £35 with no entrance fee.

Upon arrival ask for Bill or Sonia who will welcome you
and introduce you to our members



Our events for 2025 are –

Jan 15th – Wine Roulette
Feb 19th – Non Alcoholic beer discussion
Mar 19th– Scones & Bread Competition
+ Quiz
Apr 16th - Cheese/Port/Chocolate Tasting
May 21st – Games Night + Pizza £3
June 18th - Wine Competition + Quiz

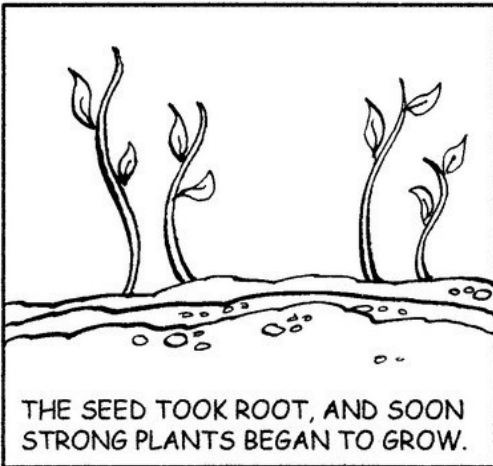
July 16th – Summer Trip TBA
Aug 20th – Wine Talk &
Ploughman's
Sept 17th- Beer/Chutney
Comp.
Oct 15th - AGM & Hot Dogs £3
Nov 19th – Talk
Dec 17th - Christmas Party

The tale of the Wheat and the Weeds

JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS

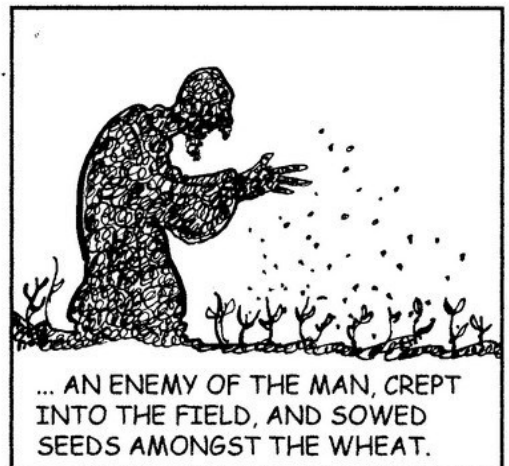
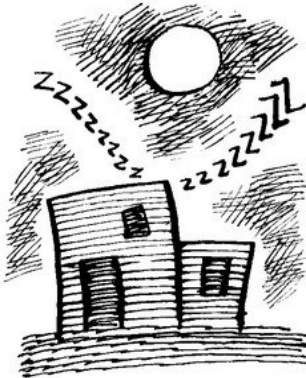


ONE WAS ABOUT A MAN WHO SOWED SEED IN HIS FIELD.

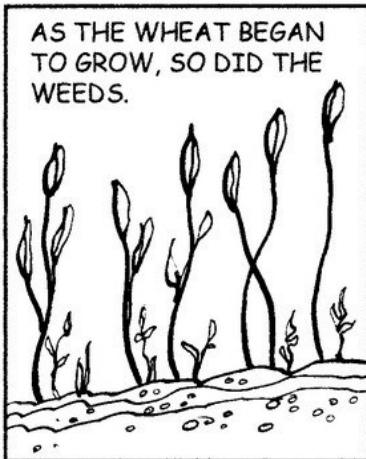


THE SEED TOOK ROOT, AND SOON STRONG PLANTS BEGAN TO GROW.

BUT ONE NIGHT, WHEN EVERYONE WAS ASLEEP...



... AN ENEMY OF THE MAN, CROPT INTO THE FIELD, AND SOWED SEEDS AMONGST THE WHEAT.



AS THE WHEAT BEGAN TO GROW, SO DID THE WEEDS.



WHEN THE SERVANTS SAW THE WEEDS THEY SUGGESTED RIPPING THEM OUT.



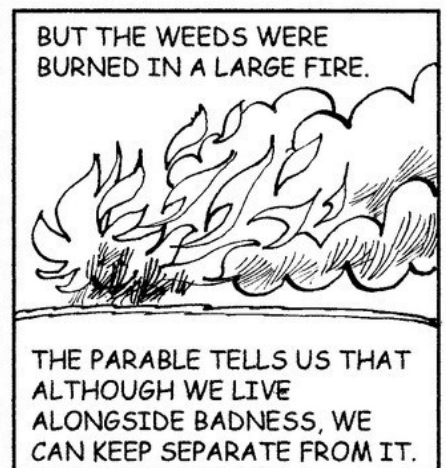
NO, LET'S LEAVE THEM UNTIL HARVEST TIME!



IF YOU PULL THEM UP NOW, YOU MIGHT KILL THE WHEAT TOO. WE'LL SORT THEM OUT AT HARVEST,



WHEN THE WHEAT WAS READY, IT WAS HARVESTED INTO HUGE BUNDLES.



BUT THE WEEDS WERE BURNED IN A LARGE FIRE.

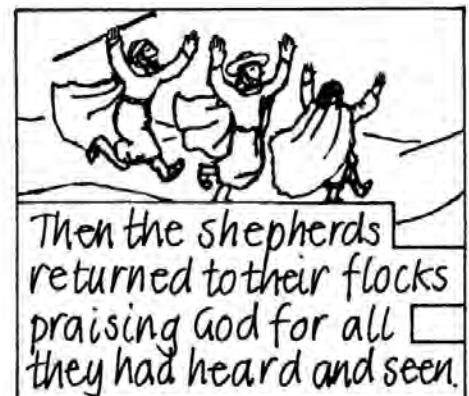
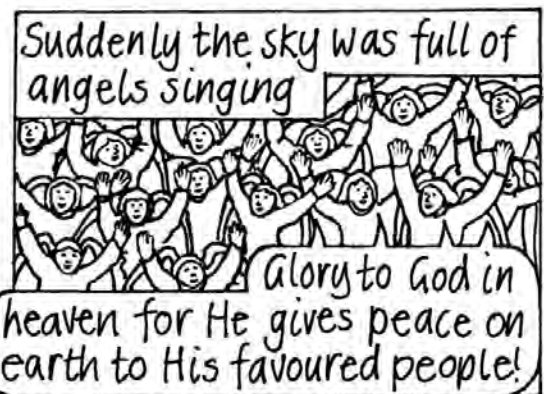
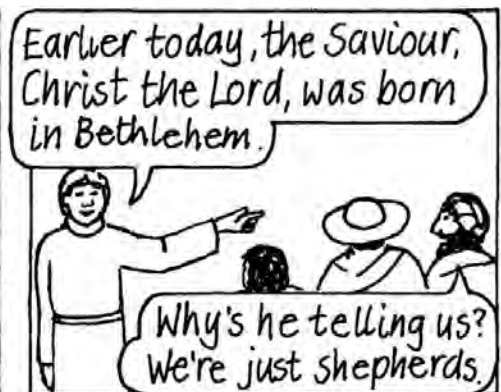
THE PARABLE TELLS US THAT ALTHOUGH WE LIVE ALONGSIDE BADNESS, WE CAN KEEP SEPARATE FROM IT.

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Luke chapter 2 verses 8 to 20

Shepherds were paid to look after the flocks
out on the hillside. Uneducated and rough,
they were usually avoided, or overlooked.



St Luke's Ladies Group

17 July	Goat in a Soap - Irene Barnett
21 August	St Helena Hospice Charity Evening
18 September	In Costume from Kentwell House - Eleanor Jenkins
16 October	Live Your Life in Colour + Scarves - Sandra Sparrowhawk
20 November	Sugar Craft Guild
18 December	Christmas Meal + Entertainment
15 January 2026	Gemstone Talks - Jason Middleton

Various local charities are supported every year.

Look out for details about outings on the noticeboards.

MEETING IN THE CHURCH EXTENSION
3rd THURSDAY IN THE MONTH
at 7.30pm
ADMISSION £4.00
INCLUDES RAFFLE
& REFRESHMENTS



Keeping the county warm



Fuel Services

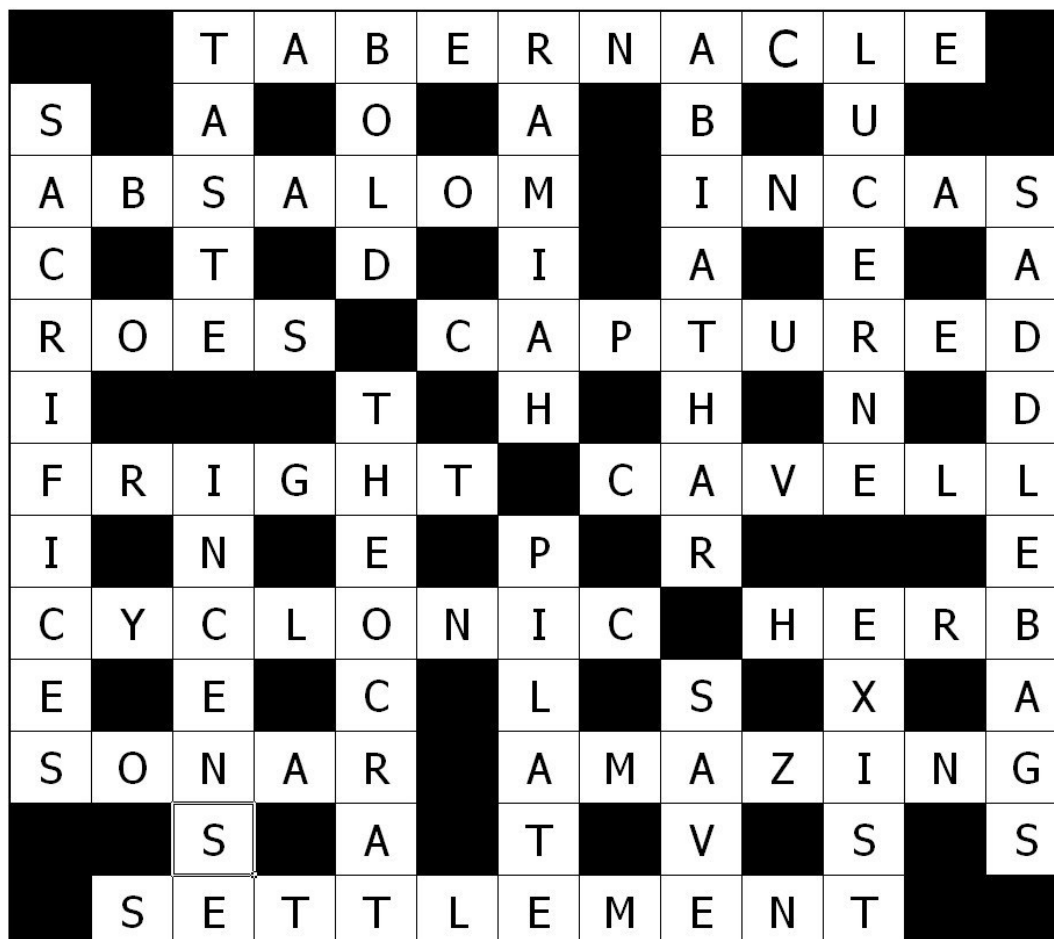
Contact BFS for prompt delivery of your domestic heating oil direct from our local Danbury Fuel Services depot. You'll find no better service, no better value.

T 01245 425251 www.bfsfuelservices.uk

Quiz 2025 answers

1. Ashley, Bert and Conall were names of storms
2. The re-wilding lynx project was releasing cats in the wild.
3. Palmerston was brought out of retirement for a “purr-fect” diplomatic posting to Bermuda.
4. President Trump’s favourite word is tariffs.
5. The nickname of the original line was the Varsity Line as it linked the two universities. It was a favourite journey of CS Lewis.
6. Donald Trump called King Charles “aman” Beautiful.
7. *Restaurants* in Pozzuoli Italy cooked up a plan to attract customers who are being put off by 1800 land tremors a month. They got an “earthquake discount” if stayed until dessert served. I do not know if it was successful. I usually prefer the cheeseboard after a meal.
8. Birmingham’s ‘Binmageddon’ was the Bin collector strike.
9. The music that accompanied the astronauts was Louis Armstrong's *What a Wonderful World*.
10. The colour of the smoke used to signify the election of a new Pope is white.
11. Elon Musk was associated with the Department of Government Efficiency.
12. Loretta Swit was best known for MASH. The television series made stars of some of the actors and went on much longer than the Korean War, which it was based on.
13. Destructive bottom trawling is a type of deep sea fishing.
14. The composer who invented ‘furniture music’ was Erik Satie.
15. The “mushroom murders” were done by adding fungi to dinner guests’ meals.
16. The Grand Prix was not a prom.
17. Delulu means delusional.
18. Heartthrob Terence Stamp played Sgt Troy in the 1960s film of *Far from the Madding Crowd*.
19. October Beerfest in Germany starts in September.
20. She poured a cup of coffee down a drain.

Solutions:





The opinions expressed in Open Door are not necessarily those of the Ministry Team, Team Council or Parochial Church Councils of the Thurstable and Winstree Team Ministry. Open Door is not responsible for errors or omissions, accuracy of the content, nor the failure of any published event to go ahead.